/4 cont./

At the present time the family concept of the woman is changing because of the conduct of mestino and even pure Indian women brought about by changes in their economic situation and by contact with whites. Gradually, the traditional organization of the marriage payment and fidelity based on the payment is being broken down, because it is the women themselves and not their relatives who receive the payment, and for their activities as prostitutes. The phenomenon is noted not only in the centers of the interior which wave contacts with whites and Negroes -- principally traders and civil authorities -- but also and especially in Maracaibo and some of the towns in the department of Magdalena, to which they have been obliged to emigrate. However, they maintain the family concept of mutual assistance and share their income with their close relatives, not as before in the form of the marriage payment but as income earned in the sex market.

Prenatal care and birth. A woman learns that she is pregnant when she feels a loss of appetite and repugnance for food. The later disappearance of the menstrual period confirms the suspicion, and she immediately sees to it that her husband is informed of the event, so that he may know of his coming fatherhood. Also, in the case where she has had extramarital relations in the absence of the husband, the woman, when she feels these early symptoms of pregnancy, goes in search of him, cohabits with him, and later can tell him of her condition, thus avoiding possible later suspicions. From the time of the ending of the first menstrual period, she begins to count the months, and she expects delivery after the eighth month.

Before the arrival of a child, the woman complies with established rules intended to avoid a lengthy and difficult delivery as well as to safeguard the new arrival from sickness which would affect his normal mental and physical well-being. Included in these prescriptions are to be found some of useful and practical value and others with a marked magic aspect. These magic observances generally affect both parents, although some only refer to the woman, /5/ others exclusively to the man (1).

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836 The virginity of the single woman is becoming very rare in La Guajira. Premarital relations have been occurring with greater frequency in recent years as a consequence of the social disintegration of this indigeneous group, caused by a multiplicity of reasons, among which stand out: the influence of the so-called white groups, among whom free union is common practice; emigration to regions such as Venezuela, where the Indian women break away from the norms of their ancestors and find an atmosphere which does not resent the sexual adventures of women but rather stimulates them; the scarcity and hunger in certain regions which push the inhabitants toward the urban centers of the peninsula, where the woman gives herself in exchange for the wherewithal to satisfy her vital needs of food and dress, an attitude which her relatives recognize and tolerate because, indirectly, it also helps them. The premarital relations forced by circumstances or encouraged by them have been creating a social class of women which previously did not exist nor could fit within her social organization: the prostitute. It must be noted that it is the mestizo woman (mixture of Indian with white or negro) who more easily takes this road.

[548] [563]

Also one has to take into account the premature premarital relations that have always existed in La Guajira and which take place between the girls and their brothers, and even their fathers, when the girls are about ten or more, when they go to the fields or the countryside in general and meet the boys who are devoting themselves to pasturing. (Cf. Chap. II.)

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836 558 178 The common type of furtive sexual relations of the adult woman causes her to drop in social esteem and particularly in that of the men, producing, indirectly, the phenomenon that virginity as a basis for marriage has become overvalued. Before, it was a fact that was logically expected as an essential, and the lack of this condition created social and psychic problems.

/71 cont./

684 poor groups does not call for compensation payment as it is a distinct source of income, which compensates for a payment difficult to obtain and which necessitates invoking the force of the whole family group, usually very dispersed due to migration.

It must also be made clear that the payment demanded has a special character with regard to the amount, which should not reach or be equal to a marriage payment in normal times, because in that case the man could retain the woman as his own property. Also, this payment must come from the personal capital of the guilty individual as his relatives or friends will not be disposed to bring forward livestock or jewels to accept conduct not in accord with the legal norms of the peninsula. Also, this payment is not at all large, and in a certain sense it is a sanction against lack of control in conduct and a defense against the disintegration of the family, basis of the social structure.

We have to include in this section a payment which in a certain way covers the same conditions already described. It sometimes happens that a woman is sold by her relatives under agreement to pay in two installments. On paying the first, the man has free access to cohabit with her. But if the second installment is not paid up at the end of the stipulated time, the maternal relatives of the woman take her back with any children she might have had, the man losing his right to claim the amount already paid on account, /72/ as this sum is considered a payment for abuse although it may be a higher price than that established by custom.

We should note that the Guajiro, on paying the sum claimed as indemnity for transgression of the law of marriage, considers he has terminated all his relations, and he must again pay, if he reinitiates such relations, an amount equal or greater, according to what the young girl's relatives decide. If after the payment he wants to buy her as his wife, he can claim what he has paid for the abuse as an advance payment toward the marriage payment.

548 Prostitution. Guajiro law excludes the prostitute absolutely from their society. We have seen how on reaching adult age, the

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548 woman is submitted to the ceremonies of initiation in preparation for her future life, in order to enter society without the young girl's restrictions but with all the responsibilities of a young unmarried woman. During this time she is obliged to guard her chastity, as a condition which is valued in marriage, as we have seen in the section, Valuation of virginity and of the woman, in this chapter. We have also seen that the payment for abuse is no more than an economic reparation for the illegal use of a woman, who is considered to be the personal property of her relatives, and as indemnity for the loss of prestige of the woman and of her maternal relatives. It is not a payment for services but compensation to the relatives for the offense and abuse of property.

We said, furthermore, that if a man obtains a woman through purchase with a payment in two installments and he does not comply with the second, the woman is recovered by her relatives, the installment paid being converted into a payment for abuse; and that, if the woman cohabits with a man who has not bought her, their law obliges the man to pay for her as a wife or to separate himself from her after meeting the payment demanded.

Another proof that the prostitute has no place under Guajiro law is the fact that adultery is only considered in relation to the woman, and it carries the penalty of having to return to the husband the purchase price, the children of the marriage, and a payment for the offense; besides which the lover is obliged to pay to the husband whatever he demands, or to buy the woman in question and take her for his wife.

Finally, the woman on becoming widowed is not considered to be free but becomes the property of the heirs of the husband, so that, even then, she is not able to practice prostitution freely.

Summing up, the woman is considered as private property which can be acquired by purchase and which no one except the owner may enjoy or dispose of. She is always the private property of someone: when a young unmarried woman, of her

/73/

548 maternal relatives; when married, of her husband; and if he dies, of his heirs. In case of adultery it is her lover who must pay to have legal right to her.

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Prostitution, which is continually growing in La Guajira, has many causes, which have developed rapidly in recent times, endangering all the social organization. The principal ones are:

548 567 627 Slavery. The /social/ organization in La Guajira has created for itself this class of social elements placed at the very margin of life. Its origin is in the clan groups which, when weakened by economic failure and the scarcity of male elements to strengthen them, have been slowly pushed to the margin /of society/. The murder, for example, of a member of a powerful group caused by a member of one of these groups spells its ruin. The law establishes in such cases a considerable payment to the maternal relatives of the murdered man by the clan group that is responsible for his death, a payment which has to be transacted in accordance with special forms which facilitate peaceful settlement between both parties and a reasonable time limit, at the termination of which both groups renew their peaceful relations and give proofs of new friendship, although in practice these appearances show themselves to be quite false. However, when the aggressor belongs to an inferior group, these negotiations are not followed out, as it would appear that added to the sorrow over the death is the offense of the crime having been perpetrated by a group without social standing, without prestige, and without sufficient means to pay the indemnity. "These people," say the offended ones, "who have no money to pay us for the grief they have caused us have no right either to a legal negotiation." They fall on the small group in overwhelming numbers like an avalanche, on their lands and their houses, leveling them to the ground without

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548 567 627 mercy, burning their homes with the occupants in them, destroying the crops, filling up and poisoning the springs, carrying off the few livestock and personal effects there may be about. The worst fate is suffered by the children and especially the women, old women, young women, and girls, who are carried off as trophies of war to pay with their service as slaves for the crime committed by their relative.

548 567 Although these women are not to be considered as true prostitutes, their daughters are forced to suffer this illegal condition because, although they belong to their mother's master, they are strongly besieged by all the men, especially by those who have not yet been able to buy a wife and who will find /74/ satisfaction in them without economic or social responsibilities. The girls submit little by little to this situation, giving themselves to whoever gives them presents, and eventually become harlots. (Cf. Slavery and Bond Service.)

Furthermore, many of these girls are sold by their masters to be sent out of the peninsula (to Aruba, Maracaibo, Curaçao, Riohacha, etc.), but when they grow up they escape and, when it is possible for them, they return again to La Guajira, where the fate that awaits them is no better, for they have been placed, so to speak, outside the law, as they lack the two strong social bonds: land and blood. Hence, not possessing these, they are free, which is equivalent to being without protection. No one will take notice of what they do, but neither will anyone speak up for them to prevent their being the victims of force. They have no economic backing nor private means. Moreover, many of them have been started off in prostitution during their servitude. In the circumstances described, it is rare that they can raise themselves and manage to find a place again in a society that turned them out, so that they find themselves obliged to live on the margin of society, as also their offspring. In this way slavery creates the prostitute, a public property, something that does not fit within the legal norms, as we have seen throughout this chapter.

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548 566 Bond service. Bond service is different from slavery in that it is not the result of a conquest in war of one group by another, but rather the consequence of economic decline, since when a group cannot support its members, they sell them. Years ago large numbers were sold to Venezuela as farm hands to the Caribbean Islands, etc., and although the investment was never very safe, due to the escaping of the Indians, the sales were numerous, and even today they are very frequent. Furthermore, it is common practice at the present time in the Jarara region, short of resources in summer, to take the nephews and nieces of an individual who has been forced by necessity to commit robbery as bond servants to repay by their own labor what was stolen.

Women in this situation, separated from their group and unable to be helped by them, are coveted by the men. Those who are sent away, on their return, find themselves in a situation similar to that of slaves who have come back. They settle in the cities and turn to prostitution, as the whites find in them a simple solution of their problems, and they find a means of subsistence.

548 177 The mestizo. Cross breeding /mestizaje/ has not affected Guajiro culture in respect to the tradition regarding magic, language, organization, etc., but has had an effect on social morality, which /75/ is readily forsaken by the mestizo woman of lower class, commonly called cabeza loca ("madcap"), by the general run of Indians, owing to her sexual promiscuity, her easily becoming a prostitute and giving herself and living for certain periods of time with a man, (mestizo or white as a general rule) to leave him later to follow an endless chain. The pure-blooded Guajiro woman, even if she takes to prostitution, never abandons, from any motive, the established norms of modesty, [578] such as never to show herself naked, never to behave rowdily, etc., as there is no greater insult than that a man should affirm such things about her. The mestizo woman, however, does not respect these concepts. For this reason she is sought after more and more, and she freely and openly throws over the traditional

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548 177 limitations. We have said that this applies to the lower classes because the mestizo woman of the upper-class groups are as modest and conservative, or more so, than the pure Indians. The mestizo woman of lower class is not under the control of her maternal relatives, and for this reason there is no repressive power capable of making her submit to that which is right.

548 167 Geographic conditions. A natural phenomenon is basically the cause of prostitution in La Guajira: the long summers /dry season/ that the peninsula has suffered during the past five years, a period in which the winter seasons /rainy season/ have been nonexistent, so that neither stock breeding nor agriculture have been able to subsist and have dwindled to a minimum, so ruining the traditional economy of the population. The result is that the native, seeing himself without resources to live, migrates or succumbs through inanition, as we were able to observe during our stay in that region. In this state of affairs the native will go to Venezuela where he finds paid work which alleviates his situation and that of his relatives in the peninsula. Sometimes the women also migrate with their families.

When the men emigrate, the family groups lose their elements of support in difficult situations, and the women and children are left with diminished protection and control, that is to say, they depend on themselves. When the assistance from the men is limited, the families must live by any means they can, and they then feel the attraction of the /urban/ centers where they expect to be able to find the solution to their problem of making a living. They migrate, and their only opportunity is in prostitution. There the women begin a way of life foreign to their social organization, made easier by the absence of male relatives who would put a stop to that way of life, since by being absent they cannot present their claims for compensation payment, and, furthermore, they are, generally, unaware of this state of affairs. The married woman whose husband is absent over long periods, impelled by this same situation and her own sexual need, turns to prostitution without anyone /76/ to make the corresponding claim. Married

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548 167 and unmarried women come for periods from the country to the urban centers; they settle in shacks on the outskirts, live by easy virtue for a time to procure enough to purchase new robes and food, and return home until these provisions have been used up, when they again return to the centers and to the sex market.

548 434 167 In addition to the summers which have made the traditional economic life impossible, the situation is made more acute by the fact that provisions have to be brought in from the neighboring department of Magdalena, since of all that is consumed in the peninsula nothing can be grown there. But the contraband agricultural produce smuggled from this area to Maracaibo, where for various reasons they pay a higher price for these products, encourages the export of these from the country, so increasing the problem of hunger in La Guajira, as the cost of provisions rises and the trader, on his part, increases his price to cover what he considers his due as middleman. In this way the basic things required by the Guajiro, corn and panela, reach an exorbitant price, especially in the more remote places where the source of supply is in the hands of one trader.

548 167 Furthermore, the woman finds few sources of income in the centers. Only those women of upper La Guajira /La Alta Guajira/ who have been educated in the Capuchin mission can work different kinds of woven cloth which find acceptance in the markets of Maracaibo and in the department of Magdalena. Practically no one wants to work in domestic service because their natural independence unsuits them to accommodate themselves to the demands. Some collect divi-divi in season, others help their husbands in the saltworks, but there the wages paid are so low that they are almost worthless and not encouraging.

Having little to occupy themselves with, their domestic work being reduced to a minimum, they pass the time in incredible idleness, gossiping among themselves, lying in their hammocks, and in the evenings going into the urban centers, if they live near by, to offer themselves to the natives of the civilizados /nonnatives, see below/ who at that hour are leaving their work.

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548 167 Another of the aspects in which emigration influences prostitution among the Guajiro women is that when they, alone or with their husbands and their relatives, go to Venezuela, they usually settle in Maracaibo and other centers in the state of Zulia, where the civilizado element looks on the Guajiro woman as a coveted solution to their sex problems. Various causes influence this outlook: The women have no effective protection, they are healthy and easily seduced with cheap presents which they overvalue in their poverty; also, they are nearly always looked down on as inferior, as belonging to the lowest social level. This pursuit of the women for sexual purposes is so intense that the story is told of /77/ girls arriving in Maracaibo in the morning who have by afternoon received attractive offers before which they have succumbed. The missionaries endeavor to intervene, but it is useless; the cajolery and promises are more attractive than good advice and the training of their childhood and youth. When they are not public prostitutes they are bought, according to Guajiro law, by married Venezuelan men and are thus partially introduced into that society in the role of concubines until they are repudiated at the whim of their masters.

548 In addition to these reasons, the women see the apparently advantageous situation that their friends and relatives have acquired for themselves, and they think that what they have to lose is not so much when compared with the resulting benefits. The poverty they have suffered at home in their own country and the promise of an easy solution overcomes the resistance of the most reluctant. Furthermore, their friends are the first to advise them to take the step. Guajiro law is so far away it seems they are beyond its reach, and they cannot weigh the disastrous consequences of this life except from their own and immediate point of view. All these combined causes lead the Guajiro woman who migrates on the road to prostitution, which unavoidably happens sooner or later, and she will not afterward return to the normal life of her /family/ group.

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The civilizado /civilized/ element. A civilizado according to the Guajiro concept is one who does not belong to their community or the mestizo who has adopted a culture different from theirs. The classification covers people on the Atlantic coast both Columbian and Venezuelan (negroid for the most part) and some other white or mestizo groups in the interior of Columbia.

This civilizado element puts the native on an inferior plane not only where their material culture is concerned, which they despise, but also their spiritual aspect. They look with compassion and curiosity at the manifestations of this and find them difficult to accept. They regard them as savages, and they respect them only because they are strong. This has provoked in the native a feeling of suspicion and misgiving in all that is dear to him, and he has become resentful to a point that he hopes to find a similar failing in the white man in order to reproach him with it.

The cultural norms of a social and moral aspect that they receive from the civilizado are precisely what lead to the systematic destruction of their organization. Generally, the white men who go to La Guajira are men who have to be absent from their families for various reasons, and they find the solution for their biological needs in the Guajiro woman. Their temporary residence there will not permit them (as it might when they make it their permanent home) to buy a girl for a wife, because the price is high for their small means, and it would cause /78/ problems with their own families, so that a man of this type solves the situation by making an easy arrangement with an Indian woman, who gives herself to him in return for presents or a money payment on each occasion.

The Guajiro woman who has emigrated from her district sooner or later returns home and finds in the peninsula a propitious medium for the life she began when away, because beside finding it difficult to obtain a legitimate source of income, her prime needs continually demand immediate satisfaction.

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Consequences. The consequences that prostitution has brought to Guajiro society are various: The first and decisive one is the almost absolute wreck of the social organization due to the destruction of marriage, the mainstay of social life based on the purchase of a woman, who by this transaction becomes the private property of the man in the matrimonial sense. If she is unfaithful there arise the claim for compensation payment and the whole series of consequences which we have seen previously, all tending to preserve conjugal fidelity. On the woman's turning to prostitution, the legal norms which establish that marriage payment and the very constitution of the family become useless as it erases the essential character of the family: i.e., procreation. There is an end to the principle of the establishment of new social cells and fecundation takes second place. It is the biological satisfaction that is sought, not the procreation of children, a phenomenon which constitutes a grave social problem for, although many people accept contraceptives, others through ignorance or thoughtlessness on the part of the man do not use them, and the natural consequences of pregnancy are not long delayed. Then they have recourse to all the abortives they know of empirically, using the herbs whose active qualities are claimed by the old women of the Sierra de Macuira, or those they have traditionally learned from their ancestors, or they ask the assistance of a woman practiced in these matters, who for a fee provokes the abortion by traumatic massage on the abdomen of the pregnant woman and keeps the secret.

Besides abortives, the Guajiro woman uses potions of herbs which sterilize her for a time, up to three years, without stopping menstruation, and others which interrupt the menstrual cycle for long periods with the result that her sexual relations do not lead to pregnancy. She even appeals to magic to get this result, for example, by drinking, while fasting, a potion made from mule's excrement left to soak overnight and then decanted. They believe that as this animal is sterile so will the woman who imbibes the preparation.

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SV8 177 Furthermore, doing away with marriage by payment destroys with it the family backing which, in the economic sense, means as much to the woman, the man, and the children as to the maternal relatives through the system of payments, repayments, and compensations that are consequent on it. Above all, the woman loses the social and economic backing of her group, and the man the guarantee of her fidelity.

The woman who has migrated and has taken to this way of life while outside her native land, or who has accepted it in her own homeland, usually will not return to the country, or if she does it is only to live there while she spends the money she has earned, to return later and resume her trade. Today prostitution is a menace to all La Guajira. Young Indians who have not been able to obtain a wife or simply anyone who wants sexual satisfaction will find it with a Guajiro woman by means of a casual payment, and with prostitution has come a new scourge for the Guajiro: [164] venereal diseases, brought and spread by those who have acquired it in their relations with the civilizados. Ignorance on the part of the prostitute of hygienic precepts which would free her from these ills has resulted in the disease increasing dangerously. [757] Moreover, there exists in the peninsula no clinic where the native can go for treatment, and there is only one doctor and a poorly equipped hospital in Uribia. Hence, prostitution has aided, and still aids, not only social bankruptcy by the wreck of the institution of the family but also physical degeneration by the unrestricted spreading of venereal diseases among the youth of the country.

Outfit and dowry of the woman. When a Guajiro woman is 583 bought the family gives her the inheritance, in livestock, which is hers by right. These gifts go to her in accordance with her social standing and with the amount of the marriage payment, because this establishes the prestige of the maternal relatives. They know that a man who has paid dearly for his wife expects that she has not cost so much just for the sake of the marital satisfactions she may give him, or for her known high social status, but that in her price there will be included an inheritance handed over to the bride for life and at this time. He could not

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566 All this indicates to us that the bond servant is an individual who in spite of not being able to freely dispose of his labor is an active member of society. His services are not voluntary, but he is ruled by the general norms which govern the community: His life is respected, his women may not be sexually assaulted nor taken as wives without their own consent, and, above all, his children are always free and all the family property remains in their hands or those of their relatives.

Rights of the master. The master has the right to make free use of his bond servants in all the manual labors he considers necessary /149/ and the right to sell them, but no matter how often the bond servant changes masters, the sale refers to the use of his labor, not to his person.

Sexual life of bond servants. Women bought as bond servants are not sexually under the control of their masters or of his family. However, when their consanguineous relatives live so far away that they cannot exercise their influence, female bond servants are taken advantage of by their masters, not by right but by act. This situation of relative sexual freedom means that they are besieged by men more than are slave women, as the latter are protected by their master. As a consequence 548 of this state of affairs, female bond servants frequently become prostitutes through not having the protection either of their masters or of their relatives.

It may happen that the owner falls in love with one of his bond servants and has sexual relations with her, in which case his wife ill-treats her and turns her out; then the master may decide to buy her from her relatives, continue to cohabit with her (polygamy), and not infrequently he may abandon his first home.

If a bond servant should become pregnant her relatives present the claim for compensation payment to the group of the man responsible for the situation.

When a man has lived with a bond servant, and her relatives present a claim for compensation payment, two possibilities

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566 are open to him: to pay for the abuse and the troubles caused by pregnancy and birth, thereby losing all right to the woman, or to buy her as a wife. In the latter case she is liberated from the position of bond servant, since some of the money paid for her in marriage is used to pay off the debt to her master which gave rise to her bond service. The sale of the bond servant may also be negotiated directly with the master, a sum being paid to him which makes it possible to free her, and another sum being handed over to the woman's relatives.

566 Prostitution. The female bond servant, like the slave
548 who is sold to the whites, will escape from the house where she has to give her services and return to the peninsula, and if the control of her relatives in authority is absent, she readily turns to prostitution, it not being unusual that she has started this way of life during her time of service. When her relatives stand in the way, she may also prostitute herself behind their backs, trying to avoid in this way the consequences of the sexual commerce, or compensating them with part of her earnings. This situation may be considered abnormal in the Guajiro social system, as prostitution is considered to be /150/ outside the law. But when the demands of hunger are felt, due to the prolonged summer /droughts/, the situation becomes normal in the social levels less favored economically, and families have to tolerate their single women prostituting themselves and assisting with what they receive from their commerce in the maintenance of the other members.

566 Situation of the children. The children of a female bond servant are always free; frequently they work in the house of their mother's master as compensation for the cost of their keep, but legally they are free.

Trade. During the fierce summers that scorch La Guajira Peninsula, which seem to follow a 25- or 30-year cycle, the sale of human beings as bond servants becomes more intense. It is at these times that poor families are obliged to part with relatives they can do without, especially those who cannot

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554 626 In addition to bond servants and slaves who at any rate are still part of the Guajiro social conglomerate in their special status, there exist those outside society who have got into this situation as a consequence of breaking of the regimen for social stability, security, but who besides not having paid the indemnity required for their delict are cast out of the community because their clan group refuses to admit any responsibility for the crime, by which act they are excluded from the community and have to flee and go into exile. This appears to have been the case with the Kusina Indians, who have already definitely disappeared, due to the exterminating expeditions that have been launched against them by all the consanguineous Guajiro groups and by whites. They were a group of Indians ostracised for delicts committed, who had no family backing and who gathered together to live by robbery and murder of other Indians and the whites who lived in the neighborhood of their hideouts in the Sierra de los Kosina. /253/

IX

554 548 Prostitutes also can be classified among those of lowest feminine status, as their conduct is not in accord with the female cultural patterns for women in the community, which practically treats them as outcasts. Although they may enjoy a measure of individual prestige due to the satisfactions they give, they attract to themselves the contempt of society as they are constantly violating culture patterns. They are evaluated in two ways, but primarily are classified as despicable beings, violators of cultural patterns.

Nevertheless, during the summers, which are the periods of scarcity and misery, their conduct finds, if not approbation, at least excuse among their relatives, who see in their way of life a means of income which assists in part to supply the most basic necessities of life. Furthermore, with the change in ideas

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554 548 with respect to social questions as fundamental as marriage, there has been a change in the judgment of prostitution and concubinage, two ways by which a woman escapes from legal strictures, almost always because of necessity or the special circumstances in which her group is placed.

X

554 562 888 We should note here the important fact that the functions ascribed to the working Guajiro woman no longer count when she has passed through her adult change of life, that is to say, when she has passed the menopause. From this moment it appears that she enjoys absolute freedom within the community to do those things that are prohibited a woman before she reaches that condition, such as to become inebriated, to smoke, to indulge in sexual liberties; certain taboos now no longer refer to her, and the cultural patterns need not be so rigorously complied with; she is not obliged to become the wife of the heirs of the dead husband, etc. Her status again becomes effective with all its attached functions after her death, as we shall see.

XI

554 769 775 The active presence of an individual in Guajiro society is not lost at his death. In the concept that these natives have about death, clearly expressed in the study made by my husband to which we have /254/ made reference several times, every member of the community continues being a member of it and exercises influence over his fellow men after his death. His status in the afterlife is determined by the same conditions that he had during his earthly life: the acquiring of greater wealth and of prestige confers a higher status in the world of the spirits.

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of war to the death will result between the clans affected.

One has to take into account the fact that a woman who has been bought for wife is relatively valuable, and the native is not always in a position to accumulate the number of animals sufficient to pay for her, although it is considered an obligation on the part of his relatives to assist him when the time for his marriage arrives. As prostitution is so limited because of the condition of inferiority in which it places the woman who traffics in sex, the situation of the unmarried male in this respect is difficult. We repeat again that we make this statement on the basis of the facts of La Guajira social customs in normal times, and not on the basis of the present period when they are suffering from ever increasing problems of hunger, poverty, and acculturation, phenomena which are overthrowing all their traditional institutions.

Presenting the question in these terms, one can appreciate the trying position of the bachelor Guajiro native who is without slaves and without economic resources to enable him to buy a wife. He lives within a regimen of limitations and restrictions which reach even to sexual taboos which can be divided into two classes: special cases, especially applicable to the sex life of shamans, as we have seen; and general cases, applicable to the whole community and which go to the extreme of provoking curious euphemisms in the language when the word for the genital organ is phonetically similar to some other word, as in the case with the word for dog.

These restrictions must be considered in the totality of the social norms, but this is not the moment to expound on them as they will be fully covered in this review as an interpretation of the whole of Guajiro society. However, we wish to point out their presence in the Dance of the Kid, or better said their absence, since, as we have said, these restrictions disappear, and there is complete sexual freedom which permits the minstrel to caress the young maids on the pretext of deciding their virginity or loss of it, a thing that in normal times would not be permitted, and to go to the extreme of countenancing carnal union without economic or social consequences, the only

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
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applies mainly to children. These then become slave-workers and by right should be liberated once they have paid off with their work the sum for which they were bought, but that may not always be done. It is the mother, the uncle or the aunts who decide when a child is to be sold. This seems cruel to us now, yet it is not so long ago that children in the country were auctioned as workers in Sweden and elsewhere.

The owner of these slave-workers is bound to provide them with food and clothing as he must his slaves; thus children sold into slavery at least do not starve to death as they well might at home.

An Indian who has been unable to pay his debts must in certain circumstances go and serve his creditor. That is reminiscent of our own ancient slavery for debt. The obligation to work for another can also be a punishment laid upon a thief or a robber. As long as the slave-worker's clan is able to take action against the master if he goes beyond his entitlement, the position of the slave-worker is different from that of the slave; but if his clan is weak and unable to help him, he can be utterly in his master's power. At times a whole clan may become so weak that it has to seek the support of a stronger clan, and thereby becomes bound to work for the latter and is entirely dependent upon it.

While the master of a female slave may use her as he will, he has no right to have intercourse with a female slave-worker. Nor can he prevent others from entering into relations with her. If her clan has any voice in affairs, it will require damages of anyone who seduces her; but if her clan is powerless, then the female slave-worker is without support either of her clan or her master, and not infrequently ends as a prostitute. Prostitution is contrary to Indian law, but nowadays it does exist.

Even if a girl's clan is insignificant it will always demand damages, if someone has had relations with the girl and made her pregnant. Usually the man will pay up, that being the decent thing to do. Perhaps he wishes to marry the girl; in that case he must first pay her master the debt

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garden. In the morning the Indians came and demanded the body. The monks refused, not wishing to lend themselves to violation of the dead, and said that they would only treat with the chief. He, however, was not in the vicinity. The Indians threatened to burn the mission station. Fortunately the chief arrived at this juncture, and told his braves that they must not use violence against the monks.

'Never to kill and just to rescue those condemned to death as you do, does not fit in with our laws,' he said to the monks. 'You Capuchins lack any sense of reality. But I shall do you no harm, since you never harm others.'

It sometimes happens that the victor instead of killing his male prisoners will sell them as slaves to the white men, preferably to places at some distance from the peninsula, such as the Dutch islands of Aruba and Curaçao, Zulia in Venezuela, or the Magdalena department of Colombia. The Indians deal in slaves among themselves; they also sell them to the white men and these, too, traffic in them among themselves.

Legally, a slave sold to a white person should become free, but in reality the owner of the *hacienda* treats him as a serf, branding his own mark on him, depriving him of his clan name and giving him his own. To sell a prisoner into slavery is not always to hear the last of him; for some have escaped from the Dutch islands, stowing away on boats, and on their return have exacted vengeance. It is not easy for hacienda slaves to escape. They are often hunted like animals.

There was a considerable sale of young girls to the whites, a scandalous traffic. In Indian territory this was mainly in the hands of quasi-chiefs, generally mestizos and other half-breeds with no right to the title, who cleverly saw how to exploit the Guajiro laws to earn a lot of money. The Guajiro customary law was never intended to apply to export.

The monks were the chief opponents of the slave-traffic. They received a special grant from the government of Colombia to enable them to purchase the freedom of slave children. The white men made no distinction between slave

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riage. A Guajiro woman has no right to sell her body. The law does not recognize prostitution.

A married woman's relatives and clan do not leave her entirely in her husband's hands. He may not do as he likes with her, nor cause her suffering. Suffering and discomfort she is bound to experience in childbirth, however, and of that he is the primary cause; thus whether as a result of legal or illegal relations, the man must compensate the mother for her confinement by giving her family a few cattle. The woman herself may not eat their meat under any circumstances.

Originally the Guajiro clans were exogamous; members were not allowed to marry within the clan. That is no longer insisted upon, but not only brothers and sisters, but maternal males and cousins on the mother's side, are still reckoned among the forbidden degrees. It is unthinkable that an Indian girl should marry her maternal uncle; that would be like having her father for her husband. It once happened that an uncle and niece had a secret relationship and the girl became pregnant. A monk married them, but the Indians regarded the relationship as a heinous crime and the whole district reacted so violently that the couple had to leave the peninsula and go far away, where there was no risk of meeting members of their tribe.

There is nothing to prevent an Indian getting himself several wives. Infrequently white men have married into Guajiro families and they too have had to pay a bride-price. A number of poor Creoles have contracted Guajiro marriages with poor girls. I have already mentioned how foreign oil workers made Guajiro marriages. In those early days there were no arrangements made for employees' families, and the Guajiro girls suited those primitive conditions very well, though as a rule such marriages with Indian girls were very short-lived, as those of the Creoles with them still are. The girl is soon abandoned, if that can be done without risk, the girl's family in such cases being powerless. So the Indians told me.

The monks had already told us that where Creoles had married Guajiro girls of good family, those marriages had

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the first wife retains a privileged position. She will be of the best family and the highest in rank. She is the hostess.

One day, when I was standing talking with Mauana, he pointed to a couple walking past and said eagerly:

'You should picture those with your apparatus.'

I photographed the two, who to me appeared very ordinary. The woman had her cheeks and nose painted red. Mauana whispered to me that the woman was not a woman, but that they were two men living together. Later we came across several Indian men who did women's work and wore women's dress. This was not considered really right, but it was looked upon with indulgence. In the early days of discovery gold coins were found on the coast by Santa Marta which depicted 'shameful acts contrary to Nature'. Among the Guajiros' relatives in the West Indies there were chiefs who had whole harems of boys.

'We were talking of bride-price and buying women slaves,' said I, to revert to more normal things. 'What does a poor youth do, who possesses nothing?'

Everyone agreed that it was a pity about any such. The law had definite regulations for intercourse between man and woman, and any infringement involved a claim for damages. If anyone seduced a woman, he must pay considerable compensation to her relatives, however willing she may have been; but if he took her against her will, it costs him considerably more. A poor man cannot pay and therefore risks losing his life as a punishment. The Indians admitted that here and there on the border there was prostitution, but it was mostly mestizo women who lent themselves to that. In Guajira proper, there were no prostitutes. Both the chiefs and the monks told us that. Thus in the interior, a young man without means must live a life of abstinence. The time when the dances of the kid were performed would be his only opportunity of enjoying a woman's favours, provided he could find a willing partner. At this time the otherwise strict code is suspended and free love permitted.

Mauana had promised to arrange a dance, but of another kind. The dances of the kid are performed during the rainy